Pictures and Pictorialization in Pride and Prejudice

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The close relation between Jane Austen's novels and the theatre has been impressed on readers and reviewed by critics since the novels were first published. One of the most notable comments among her contemporaries appeared in *Quarterly Review* in 1821, where she was compared to Shakespeare in the way she masterfully represents human nature (Whately 97-98). Yet it has not been sufficiently examined how her style owes much to the theatre. Even though Austen herself enjoyed amateur theatricals in her home, there has been some underestimation of the significance in her novels in twentieth century criticism, especially of *Mansfield Park*. It is principally because she describes the prominent contrast between Fanny's moral objection to acting and other merrymaking characters engaged in private theatricals (Trilling 185-94). At the turn of the century, however, two books of the same title *Jane Austen and the Theatre* were published by Paula Byrne and Penny Gay in 2002. Each book makes a detailed explanation of Austen's theatre experience—private theatricals and theatre-going—as well as of the theatre, actors and actresses at that time. They inquire into her literary style in comparison with Shakespeare, contemporary dramatists such as R. B. Sheridan, Oliver Goldsmith, and Hannah Cowley. Both of them specifically show her similarities to their works and lay great emphasis on the distinguishing features in her novels. *Pride and Prejudice* is no doubt the most dramatic of all Austen's major works, and Elizabeth Bennet is a vivacious, playful and witty heroine like a comedienne on stage. In this paper I would like to demonstrate that Austen skillfully interweaves pictorial expressions in the theatrical world of *Pride and Prejudice*, and that she makes great use of pictorialization of scenes to reinforce the theatricality and to illuminate Elizabeth's attractiveness.[1]

During the period from the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth

century, revolutionary changes took place in the society due to the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the enclosure movement. The arts and literature were also in a period of transition from neoclassicism to romanticism, when there was a riotous profusion of aesthetic theories and diverse styles of painting. At that time women writers and readers were on the rise, and a few women painters like Angelica Kauffmann achieved success.[2] Even though women made sketches as an accomplishment, read travel books on picturesque beauty, and appreciated scenes on the basis of aesthetic paradigm, they had to confront social restrictions in the male-dominated, patriarchal society and struggle to follow literature and art as a profession. In *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716-1818*, Elizabeth A. Bohls points out that women were systematically excluded from educational institutions and knowledge as cultural power, and had difficulties to practice the aesthetics of that culture. Bohls comprehensively explores a body of women travel writers and novelists who extricated themselves from masculine guardianship and applied their strategies to evasively diverge from the paradigm of aesthetics during that period. At the beginning of this book Bohls cites Henry Tilney's lectures to Catherine Morland on the picturesque from *Northanger Abbey*, and indicates that Austen deliberately "chooses the language of landscape aesthetics to frame a mediation on gender, knowledge, and power" (2). In *Pride and Prejudice* Austen also employs the same strategy. Elizabeth and Mrs. Hurst encounter Darcy and Miss Bingley from another walk in Netherfield, and suddenly Mrs. Hurst leaves Elizabeth herself to take the unoccupied arm of Darcy in the path which just accepts three people. When Darcy says, "This walk is not wide enough for our party. We had better go into the avenue,"[3] Elizabeth obliquely hints at William Gilpin's description of picturesque grouping:

> But Elizabeth, who had not the least inclination to remain with them, laughingly answered,
>
> "No, no; stay where you are.—You are charmingly group'd, and appear to uncommon advantage. The picturesque would be spoilt by admitting a fourth. Good bye." (53)

From the notes of the Cambridge edition in 2006, this alludes to Gilpin's picturesque principle of depicting cows in a good proportioned group of three, which was the most picturesque number to "achieve the most visually attractive effect, such as the classic landscape

painters had chosen to produce"(482). In striking contrast to Catherine Morland, it is noteworthy that Elizabeth is not a trainee of landscape aesthetics taught in a male language, but has acquired and practiced the aesthetic knowledge herself. Barbara Britton Wenner properly indicates that "Elizabeth has learned well not only her landscape aesthetics but also her ability to control what appears in the frame and what does not" (59) and that "we are aware of her pleasure in such artistic control"(59). Elizabeth repays their rudeness by using aesthetic language which is liable to turn a group of a highborn gentleman and two refined ladies figuratively into cattle walking together along the narrow path with shrubbery. Thus she burlesquely puts them into a frame with the language of aesthetics.

Studies related to pictorial arts and aesthetics in Jane Austen's novels has rather focused on discourses of picturesque and descriptions of scenery. In *Pride and Prejudice* they have been predominantly concerned with the picturesque landscape of Darcy's estate.[4] As the narrator says, however, "It is not the object of this work to give a description of Derbyshire, nor of any of the remarkable places through which their route thither lay; Oxford, Blenheim, Warwick, Kenelworth, Birmingham, &c. are sufficiently known"(240). This comment is the antithesis to such picturesque aesthetics and travel writings on picturesque landscape as Gilpin wrote. Jane Austen felt involved in human nature rather than landscape, as she declared in a letter when she went to the Liverpool Museum and the British Gallery in 1811, "I had some amusement at each, tho' my preference for Men & Women, always inclines me to attend more to the company than the sight" (*Letters* 179). Furthermore, she professed in another letter that "3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work on" (*Letters* 275). Austen vividly depicts their lives in her subtle writing style, "giving a dramatic air to the narrative, by introducing frequent conversations; which she conducts with a regard to character hardly exceeded even by Shakespeare himself" (Whately 97-98). Hereafter I will investigate her subversive strategies on the aesthetics of painting interwoven throughout the theatrical world of *Pride and Prejudice*, by focusing upon the descriptions not of picturesque landscape but of figures, which subtly affect the relative power relations among the characters.[5] Finally it would be clear that these strategies and features make this work not a statically pictorial but a dynamically dramatic one, where Elizabeth acts with "a lively, playful disposition, which delighted in any thing ridiculous" (12), and where "Follies and

nonsense, whims and inconsistencies *do* divert" (57) the readers.

Sir Walter Scott highly appreciated Jane Austen's style of creating "the portraits from ordinary life which shews our author's talents in a very strong point of view" (64) and compared it to the style of the Flemish school of painting:

> The author's knowledge of the world, and the peculiar tact with which she presents characters that the reader cannot fail to recognize, reminds us something of the merits of the Flemish school of painting. The subjects are not often elegant, and certainly never grand; but they are finished up to nature, and with a precision which delights the reader. (67)

The Flemish school was unsparingly criticized by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was the first president of the Royal Academy established by George III in London in 1768 and delivered a highly influential series of annual discourses on art. In the discourses Reynolds criticized the Flemish school, especially Rubens, for taking "his figures too much from the people before him" (68) and for "his want of Simplicity in Composition, Colouring, and Drapery" (86).[6] In Scott's review on Austen, the words "elegant," "grand" undoubtedly implied "the grand style" which Reynolds advocated, the lofty manner of Renaissance paintings exemplified in Raphael. In those days, the academicians considered historical painting as primary, and genre painting depicting scenes from ordinary life as secondary. Reynolds strived to raise portraiture to the status of historical painting by developing the grand style to adopt poses and settings from classicism.[7] These "elegant," "grand," "historical," and "classic" elements in Reynolds' theory are certainly contradictory to what Austen depicts in her novels, namely "pictures of domestic Life in Country Villages" (*Letters* 312).

As Tony Tanner points out, Austen seemed to have built up in mind her fictional portraits of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* (117-18). During her stay in London in 1813, she went to the Exhibition in Spring Gardens and described it:

> It is not thought a good collection, but I was very well pleased—particularly (pray tell Fanny) with a small portrait of M^rs^ Bingley, excessively like her. I went in hopes of seeing one of her Sister, but there was no M^rs^ Darcy; —perhaps however, I may find her in the Great Exhibition which we shall go to, if we have time; —I have no chance of her in the collection of Sir Joshua Reynolds's

> Paintings which is now shewing in Pall Mall, & which we are also to visit.—M[rs] Bingley's is exactly herself, size, shaped face, features & sweetness; there never was a greater likeness. She is dressed in a white gown, with green ornaments, which convinces me of what I had always supposed, that green was a favorite colour with her. I dare say M[rs] D. will be in Yellow. (*Letters* 212)

There Austen was delighted to find a portrait strikingly similar to Jane Bingley and disappointed not to see any like Elizabeth Darcy. This episode shows not merely her strong attachment for her own characters but also her consciousness of their pictorial images. She had in her mind their clear pictures in stature, features, and even favorite colours. Besides, her comment "I have no chance of her in the collection of Sir Joshua Reynolds's paintings" reveals that she regarded his portrait painting as opposed to the images of her characters, especially Elizabeth. Tanner also indicates that Reynolds' neoclassical approach is exactly opposite to Austen's style of writing (118). Unlike Jane who is so passive, reserved and handsome as to make a pretty picture, Elizabeth is "not half so handsome as Jane" (4), but "has something more of quickness than her sisters" (5). Her attractiveness lies in her activity and conversation full of lively wit like an actress on stage, which will not easily fit into a picture frame in a static posture. As to the characters' stature that was mentioned in the above letter, Austen conspicuously gives their descriptions in *Pride and Prejudice* as well. It is noteworthy that this novel describes in detail the height, size and features of the characters, most of which are delineated in comparison. The youngest Lydia is "the tallest" (8) of five sisters and "a stout, well-grown girl of fifteen, with a fine complexion and good-humoured countenance" (45). The typical epithets at Mr. Darcy are "tall" as well as "ten thousand a year," and he draws the attention "by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien" (10) and is "much handsomer than Mr. Bingley" (10). Mr. Collins is "a tall, heavy looking young man of five and twenty" (64). Lady Catherine is "a tall, large woman, with strongly-marked features, which might once have been handsome" (162), while her daughter Miss De Bourgh is "quite a little creature" (158), "so thin and small" (158), looks "pale and sickly" (162), and her features are "insignificant" (162). Georgiana Darcy is "tall, and on a larger scale than Elizabeth" (261), her figure is "formed, and her appearance womanly and graceful" (261), and she is "less handsome than her brother" (261). These descriptions of their physical characteristics turn out to be not coincidentally but intentionally given

by Austen in this work, as shown in Mr. Bingley's following remark:

> "By all means," cried Bingley; "let us hear all the particulars, not forgetting their comparative height and size; for that will have more weight in the argument, Miss Bennet, than you may be aware of. I assure you that if Darcy were not such a great tall fellow, in comparison with myself, I should not pay him half so much deference. . . ." (50)

His remark is likely to imply the framework for us to examine this novel woven with such subtle strokes of her brush, for as Austen said "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much labour" (*Letters* 323). With close attention to particulars and comparative stature of the characters, the scenes framed from the viewpoint of the gazer will emerge as if they were drawn and appreciated as portraits or conversation pieces. In *Pride and Prejudice* Austen adopts strategies of pictorialization that burlesques the existing framework of pictorial arts and aesthetics, especially Reynolds'. Thus those strategies in this novel carry a potential for overthrowing the male-dominant culture where women were excluded and confronted with innumerable difficulties in practice.

The Royal Academy headed by Reynolds enrolled only a few women painters on the membership list—Angelica Kauffman and Mary Moser, but the predominantly male-centered tendency of the art world was never undermined. This can be illustrated from "The Life School of the Royal Academy" (1772) painted by Johann Zoffany. A host of male academicians assemble around Reynolds with ear trumpet on the left of the painting and around a male nude model on the right, while the two lady painters are present there only as portraits hung on the wall. Ronald Paulson comments on that point as follows:

> The two ladies who were members are literally removed and hung as portraits on the wall. It was, of course, indelicate to show women with the nude male model, and Zoffany places their portraits behind the model's back where they cannot see the side presented to the men. But his design and placement says that these lady painters are decorative, pretty pictures rather than a meaningful part of the real functioning of the Academy. (158)

Their portraits are placed like wallflowers at the same level as plaster figures for sketching put on the other sides of the wall, which seems to symbolize their position in the Academy and even the status of

amateur women painters in the patriarchal society. Under such difficult circumstances, what was a source of their emotional support was the legend of the origin of painting mentioned by Pliny, the story of a Corinthian maid who was sorry to part from her lover leaving the country and traced the outline of his shadow cast on the wall by lamplight. Painters such as Alexander Runciman, David Allan and Joseph Wright of Derby executed this subject. Robert Rosenblum indicates that this iconography was seldom illustrated before the 1770's but acquired popularity until 1820's during the period of Romantic Classicism (281-82).[8] Furthermore, Rosenblum points out the relationship between this romantic story of the maid and women painters as follows:

> It was only natural that the many women painters of an era which so often disguised itself in antique clothing should be proud that Greek legend held the inventor of their art to be a woman, a fact which is rarely overlooked in the early pages of subsequent histories of women artists; and at times, this identity with a classical past could attain a poignant sentiment. (288)

The legend that it was a woman who had originated the art of painting evokes nostalgia for the distant past in the women painters, who could sentimentally draw some consolation from the iconography. As concerns the matter between women and pictorial art, however, Jane Austen does not nostalgically indulge herself in the legend of antiquity, but she burlesques a stronghold of male-dominated culture with a fine brush in *Pride and Prejudice.*

There has been little reference to Reynolds in recent studies of Jane Austen's works.[9] It seems to remain within the bounds of trivia. Mrs. Reynolds, the faithful housekeeper of Pemberley, shows Elizabeth and the Gardiners around the stately house and proudly displays the picture gallery and her master's portrait. The naming is regarded merely as a jest, and no further investigation has been made on the relation of the matter to *Pride and Prejudice.* However, I think that the metaphor of portraiture is subtly woven into the novel as well as that of theatrical performance, which has an overpowering attraction of Elizabeth. Bingley's declaration "let us hear all the particulars" is in striking antithesis to what Reynolds strongly advocated in his discourses on art—the comprehension of a whole. Reynolds criticized a minute attention to particulars for impairing the effect and impression of the whole:

> THE detail of particulars, which does not assist the expression of the main characteristick, is worse than useless, it is mischievous, as it dissipates the attention, and draws it from the principal point. (192)

Reynolds emphasized further:

> The excellence of Portrait-Painting, and we may add even the likeness, the character, and countenance, as I have observed in another place, depend more upon the general effect produced by the painter, than on the exact expression of the peculiarities, or minute discrimination of the parts. The chief attention of the artist is therefore employed in planting the features in their proper places, which so much contributes to giving the effect and true expression of the whole. (200)

Against Reynolds' theory, Elizabeth's picture is depicted with the very exact expression of the particulars in Netherfield. When Elizabeth walks alone there across the muddy field to attend Jane in bed with a fever, the narrator speaks in even tones:

> Elizabeth continued her walk alone, crossing field after field at a quick pace, jumping over stiles and springing over puddles with impatient activity, and finding herself at last within view of the house, with weary ancles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise. (32)

Elizabeth is shown into the breakfast-parlour room where five people have gathered—Darcy, Bingley, Miss Bingley, Mr. and Mrs. Hurst. She is exhibited among them and her appearance creates "a great deal of surprise" (32). Darcy is "divided between admiration of the brilliancy which exercise had given to her complexion, and doubt as to the occasion's justifying her coming so far alone" (33). In contrast to the narrator's detached voice, her exhibition calls the two women's attention to disfigured details, and is heaped with criticisms from their mercilessly realistic points of view, as soon as she is out of the room. Mrs. Hurst says to Miss Bingley,

> "Yes, and her petticoat; I hope you saw her petticoat, six inches deep in mud, I am absolutely certain; and the gown which had been let down to hide it, not doing its office."
>
> "Your picture may be very exact, Louisa," said Bingley; "but this was all lost upon me. I thought Miss Elizabeth Bennet looked

> remarkably well, when she came into the room this morning. Her dirty petticoat quite escaped my notice."
>
> "*You* observed it, Mr. Darcy, I am sure," said Miss Bingley; "and I am inclined to think that you would not wish to see *your sister* make such an exhibition."
>
> "Certainly not."
>
> "To walk three miles, or four miles, or five miles, or whatever it is, above her ancles in dirt, and alone, quite alone! what could she mean by it? It seems to me to shew an abominable sort of conceited independence, a most country town indifference to decorum."
>
> "It shews an affection for her sister that is very pleasing," said Bingley.
>
> "I am afraid, Mr. Darcy," observed Miss Bingley, in a half whisper, "that this adventure has rather affected your admiration of her fine eyes."
>
> "Not at all," he replied; "they were brightened by the exercise." (36)

They give a more malicious but precise picture with minute discrimination of unpleasant particulars than the narrator, who only tells us that her stockings are dirty and that her face glows by exercise. On the other hand, they make more exact delineations with details which the narrator does not mention, and brush aside the features giving a truly effective expression of the whole. The women sharply criticize her filthy petticoat six inches deep in mud, and her stockings above the ankles in dirt, and then persistently demand for Darcy to acknowledge the flaws. There is a contrast between Bingley's light tone and Darcy's grave one, although the former seemingly pleads against their disagreeably detailed discrimination. His overblown words, "very," "all" and "quite," rather clarify Bingley's voluntary comment on the exactness of their picture and artificial denial of noticing her dirty petticoat, which throws into relief Darcy's reluctance to make any direct comment on their picture. What is emphasized here is not only the women's spitefulness, but also the subversive potential for their picture to force out the idealized one of an affectionate young lady with her brilliant complexion and bright eyes. Furthermore, this shows that Elizabeth's quickness and activity transgress the limits of decorum and cannot fit statically into a picture frame.

Darcy says about his first impression on Elizabeth, "She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt *me*" (12), but soon he becomes captivated by her:

> Though he had detected with a critical eye more than one failure of perfect symmetry in her form, he was forced to acknowledge her figure to be light and pleasing; and in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by their easy playfulness. (23)

What makes him change his mind so quickly? What difference is there between the first and the second meetings with her? At the first meeting, Darcy has no conversation with her and only sees her sitting down just behind him without any dancing partner. Static and speechless Elizabeth, like a picture on the wall, does not show herself at her best yet. At the second, however, she strikingly displays her real liveliness and playfulness of her conversation and manners. In her resistant refusal to dance with him, Elizabeth looks "archly" (26) and turns away, which inspires "some complacency" (27) in him and causes him "the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow" (27). The portrait of Elizabeth would not be drawn with true expression of her eyes, as he replies to Miss Bingley's sarcastic remark on Elizabeth's vulgar relatives:

> "Oh! yes.—Do let the portraits of your uncle and aunt Philips be placed in the gallery at Pemberley. Put them next to your great uncle the judge. They are in the same profession, you know; only in different lines. As for your Elizabeth's picture, you must not attempt to have it taken, for what painter could do justice to those beautiful eyes?"
>
> "It would not be easy, indeed, to catch their expression, but their colour and shape, and the eye-lashes, so remarkably fine, might be copied." (52-53)

The more conversation he has with her, the more attention he pays her. He begins "to feel the danger of paying Elizabeth too much attention" (58), until he scarcely speaks "ten words to her through the whole of Saturday" (60) and adheres "most conscientiously to his book, and would not even look at her" (60). In spite of his first impression of her, he is irresistibly attracted by her activity and conversation. Lively and playful Elizabeth cannot be easily fitted as the merely gazed object into a picture frame.

As stated above, on entering Netherfield Elizabeth is severely exposed to the gazers' viewpoints and criticized with their keen discernment of particulars. But Austen depicts her as the gazer rather than as the gazed object throughout the whole novel. After such

exhibition, Elizabeth sets about controlling what she gazes at in the frame and takes pleasure in practicing her ability of pictorialization. She is not such a trainee as Catherine Morland who learns lessons lectured by the male language, but a practical person who has acquired the aesthetic knowledge. The drawing room of Netherfield serves as a first step in her practice. Hisayasu Hirukawa points out the following scene as a conversation piece (138-39):

> in the evening Elizabeth joined their party in the drawing-room. The loo table, however, did not appear. Mr. Darcy was writing, and Miss Bingley, seated near him, was watching the progress of his letter, and repeatedly calling off his attention by messages to his sister. Mr. Hurst and Mr. Bingley were at piquet, and Mrs. Hurst was observing their game.
>
> Elizabeth took up some needlework, and was sufficiently amused in attending to what passed between Darcy and his companion. (47)

In terms of the sister arts, Hirukawa indicates that Johann Zoffany is the counterpart of Jane Austen, and that his conversation pieces call to mind the familiar scenes in Austen's novels where people gather around the table to play cards, read a book, do needlework, have tea or meal, or chat.[10] Like a conversation piece, two small groups in the drawing-room are spread before Elizabeth's eyes; two gentlemen playing piquet and a lady observing their game, and a pair of a gentleman writing a letter and a lady addressing him to catch his attention. Under the cover of doing needlework, Elizabeth freely observes and overhears them with an air of unconcern, and fully enjoys herself looking at the scene of a husband seeker who makes strenuous but fruitless efforts. The following day she also positions herself "at work in the opposite corner" (54) in the drawing-room and has a grandstand view of the scene where two groups of a trio show their true colours. On the one side, Mr. Hurst has "nothing to do, but to stretch himself on one of the sophas and go to sleep" (54), Mr. Darcy takes a book, and Miss Bingley is "quite as much engaged in watching Mr. Darcy's progress through *his* book, as in reading her own" (55) which is only chosen because it is "the second volume of his" (55). On the other side, a happy couple of Mr. Bingley and Jane sits and talks with each other, and Mrs. Hurst, "principally occupied in playing with her bracelets and rings" (55), occasionally joins their conversation.

The genre of conversation piece, in which groups of figures are

portrayed in indoor or outdoor settings, was popular in the eighteenth century England. Ronald Paulson explains the etymology:

> An etymology of the form 'conversation piece' would include its sense of 'droll' and emphasize its origin as a reaction against such forms of 'high art' as historical painting on the one hand and idealized portraiture (including official group portraits) on the other. (121)

By its very nature, therefore, the conversation piece is diametrically opposite to such "formal or posed, mythological or ideal portraits" (121) as Reynolds' portraiture in grand style which adopts poses and settings from classical statues and Renaissance paintings. Reynolds and academicians distinctly acknowledged the predominance of historical painting over genre painting, even though they had to paint the secondary one in order to make a living. On the other hand, Austen's novels venture to demonstrate the superiority of genre painting, the scenes from domestic life in country villages in a realistic manner, as she declares that she could no more write a historical romance than an epic poem and must keep to her own line of work (*Letter* 312). Paulson mentions that three essential elements of the genre are "the surroundings or native habitat, the relationships between the people and between them and their milieu, and the function of these elements to define" (121), and also indicates that prose fiction moves from the structure of a single hero on pilgrimage toward that of the unit of a family "in which 'conversation' is essential, and the milieu narrows to a family and a country estate or a small part of London" (130). It is safe to say that this is just what Austen depicts in the drawing room scenes of her novels, especially of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Leaving her country village, Elizabeth embarks on the second phase in her practice of pictorialization with her satirical eyes. In this work Mr. Collins and Lady Catherine are portrayed as figures tinged with stateliness or grandeur. They are much more caricatured than Miss Bingley whose figure is "elegant" (56). The narrator says about Mr. Collins, "His air was grave and stately, and his manners were very formal" (64). The word "grandeur" is used three times under circumstances attendant on Lady Catherine. Mr. Collins describes "all the grandeur of Lady Catherine and her mansion" (75), and her wife Charlotte's letter conveys her picture of the new surroundings to Elizabeth:

> It was Mr. Collins's picture of Hunsford and Rosings rationally softened; and Elizabeth perceived that she must wait for her own visit there, to know the rest. (147)

So Elizabeth sets about making an observation for herself to make her own picture, when the scene changes to their habitat, Hertfordshire. More subversively, she shows her ability to pictorialize what she gazes at. Her practice of framing reoccurs during her stay at Mr. Collins' Parsonage, where she is asked to come down into the dining-room by breathlessly agitated Maria Lucas "for there is such a sight to be seen"(158). All Elizabeth can see from a window frame of the room is only "two ladies stopping in a low phaeton at the garden gate" (158):

> "And is this all?" cried Elizabeth. "I expected at least that the pigs were got into the garden, and here is nothing but Lady Catherine and her daughter!" (158)

Other characters in the Parsonage except her awfully esteem it a great honor to receive their visit. Mr. Collins triumphantly rejoices on "The power of displaying the grandeur of his patroness to his wondering visitors, and of letting them see her civility towards himself and his wife" (160), while Elizabeth doesn't look a bit impressed with it and satirically transforms the noble ladies into the pigs like a caricature. Although at this point she mistakes Mrs. Jenkinson for Lady Catherine, her act of such a framing implies latent possibilities to overthrow the absolute authority of Lady Catherine over the society. The next day Elizabeth's first presentation at Rosings is done with Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Sir William Lucas, and his daughter Maria who looks "forward to her introduction at Rosings, with as much apprehension, as her father had done to his presentation at St. James's" (161). They are showed into the drawing room where Lady Catherine, Miss De Bourgh and Mrs. Jenkinson are sitting. Sir William and Maria are completely overwhelmed by the sight:

> In spite of having been at St. James's, Sir William was so completely awed, by the grandeur surrounding him, that he had but just courage enough to make a very low bow, and take his seat without saying a word; and his daughter, frightened almost out of her senses, sat on the edge of her chair, not knowing which way to look. (162)

The grandeur is exaggerated out of proportion by their reaction, but

Elizabeth, in contrast, keenly discerns the three ladies in front of her without flinching at the grand sight:

> Elizabeth found herself quite equal to the scene, and could observe the three ladies before her composedly.—Lady Catherine was a tall, large woman, with strongly-marked features, which might once have been handsome. Her air was not conciliating, nor was her manner of receiving them, such as to make her visitors forget their inferior rank. (162)

After examining Lady Catherine, she turns her eyes on her daughter:

> she could almost have joined in Maria's astonishment, at her being so thin, and so small. There was neither in figure nor face, any likeness between the ladies. Miss De Bourgh was pale and sickly; her features, though not plain, were insignificant; and she spoke very little, except in a low voice, to Mrs. Jenkinson, in whose appearance there was nothing remarkable, and who was entirely engaged in listening to what she said, and placing a screen in the proper direction before her eyes. (162)

What is emphasized in her appearance is not the idealized image of a fragile woman, but the grotesque one of a sickly tiny creature. When she is placed in juxtaposition with her mother, a striking contrast between them comes to light. We must not forget "their comparative height and size; for that will have more weight in the argument" (50) than we may be aware of, as has seen in Mr. Bingley's remark. When the grandeur is striped off, Lady Catherine's gigantic body is burlesquely revealed in Elizabeth's eyes by comparison with her daughter's dwarfish one. The third person, Mrs. Jenkinson, has no remarkable features to add to the terrible picture. Before Elizabeth is exhibited a gross caricature of three ladies sitting in the drawing room, which is quite different from an idealized portraiture.

Elizabeth fully and amusedly displays her abilities to pictorialize the drawing scenes as satirical paintings both in Netherfield and in Rosings. The last picture in Hertfordshire, however, is violently shown toward Elizabeth, when she offensively refuses Mr. Darcy's declaration of love in the room of the Parsonage. Katrin R. Burlin indicates the following passage as a "Saturnine" portrait of Mr. Darcy, which is dramatically contrasting with the actual "Jovial" one in the picture gallery of Pemberley (160-61):[11]

> Mr. Darcy, who was leaning against the mantle-piece with his eyes fixed on her face, seemed to catch her words with no less resentment than surprise. His complexion became pale with anger, and the disturbance of his mind was visible in every feature. He was struggling for the appearance of composure, and would not open his lips, till he believed himself to have attained it. The pause was to Elizabeth's feelings dreadful. (190)

Burlin considers Darcy's pose as the conventional one in Van Dyck's portraiture and estimates the demonstration of Austen's brilliant technique of the sister art of painting in this passage. The dreadful exhibition of this portrait is followed by his long letter to explain the part that he has acted, which reveals the real characters of Mr. Wickham and him and causes Elizabeth the humiliating discovery:

> "How despicably have I acted!" she cried.—"I, who have prided myself on my discernment!—I, who have valued myself on my abilities! who have often disdained the generous candour of my sister, and gratified my vanity, in useless or blameable distrust. . . . Till this moment, I never knew myself." (208)

After the discovery, she embarks upon the final step of aesthetics in Pemberley. In Netherfield and Rosings she has sufficiently employed artistic discrimination in putting the drawing room scenes into her own visualized frames like conversation pieces, while in Pemberley of Mr. Darcy's estate, as Isobel Armstrong explains, she experiences "the 'laws of perspective', and the aesthetic category of the picturesque" (xix). She is shown into the dining-parlour:

> Elizabeth, after slightly surveying it, went to a window to enjoy its prospect. The hill, crowned with wood, from which they had descended, receiving increased abruptness from the distance, was a beautiful object. Every disposition of the ground was good; and she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks, and the winding of the valley, as far as she could trace it, with delight. As they passed into other rooms, these objects were taking different positions; but from every window there were beauties to be seen. (246)

About the passage, Armstrong states "she sees the external landscape change as her perspective changes, new pictures as it were 'propagated by Motion'" (xx). Next, Elizabeth accumulates considerable experience of viewing actual pictures of different sorts; miniatures

of Mr. Wickham, Mr. Darcy and Miss Darcy in the late master's favorite room, many good pictures, some drawings of Miss Darcy's in crayon, many family portraits and a full-size portrait of Mr. Darcy in the picture gallery. Through these manifold experiences of the real paintings as well as picturesque beauties in Pemberley, Elizabeth confirms his true character and power as a landlord and patron of the fine arts and aesthetics:

> She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration; and at that moment she felt, that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something! (245)

And she stands before the canvas of his full-size portrait:

> she thought of his regard with a deeper sentiment of gratitude than it had ever raised before; she remembered its warmth, and softened its impropriety of expression. (251)

Does she completely reform herself under masculine guardianship? Is she silenced through the lessons by the male language of aesthetics to repent of her past conducts of pictorialization? No, that is not the case. Austen more subtly employs her strategies to subvert the cultural power of the male-dominated society.

The housekeeper of Pemberley seems to be the representative of the cultural power. She guides Elizabeth and Mr. and Mrs. Gardiners through the house, and relates "the subject of the pictures, the dimensions of the rooms, and the price of the furniture" (249) and bestows her commendation on Mr. Darcy "As a brother, a landlord, a master" (250). However, Mrs. Reynolds is ironically named after the English portrait painter who was also the first president of the Royal Academy. Faithfully to the aesthetic principles of the painter, as Burlin examines (158), she disdains the miniature and offer the full-size picture of her master in the gallery as "a finer, larger picture of him than this" (247). Apparently, Mrs. Reynolds looks like the embodiment of his principles of aesthetics and the trustworthy guide to the picture gallery whose collection of masterpieces "has been the work of many generations" (38) in the same way as the family library at Pemberley. Nevertheless, there is a vicious perversion of male authority in two senses of gender and class. Reynolds dominating the world of art and

his discoursing masterly on the principles of arts before young students in the Academy is turned into the elderly housekeeper who shows the visitors around the house and boastfully speaks of her master. The leading figure in the art world is forced into the mold of a female domestic servant. Elizabeth wonders, "In what an amiable light does this place him!" (249) and "What praise is more valuable than the praise of an intelligent servant?" (250). Furthermore, when Mrs. Reynolds leads them to the gallery, what Elizabeth feels attracted to is not the masterpieces of painting:

> The picture gallery, and two or three of the principal bed-rooms, were all that remained to be shewn. In the former were many good paintings; but Elizabeth knew nothing of the art; and from such as had been already visible below, she had willingly turned to look at some drawings of Miss Darcy's, in crayons, whose subjects were usually more interesting, and also more intelligible. (250)

Considering that Pemberley is said to be modeled after Chatsworth, it is clear that the passage does not show simply her ignorance about the art. At that time, Chatsworth, the estate of William Cavendish, the fifth Duke of Devonshire, had the political salon hosted by the beautiful Duchess, Georgiana, who was portrayed by Gainsborough and Reynolds. When she went out on the streets herself to support the Whig candidate during the Westminster election of 1784, she was unprecedentedly caricatured far from the conventional female portraiture. As Kate Retford surveys, the focal point of these censures was "Georgiana's supposed neglect of her domestic duties and, in particular, her maternal responsibilities" (197). The portrait "Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire, and her Daughter, Lady Georgiana Cavendish" (1784-6) by Reynolds was displayed in the Royal Academy exhibition of 1786, and successfully defended her against these criticisms. After the closure of the exhibition, the portrait was "taken to Chatsworth where it continued to affirm her maternal prowess to visitors to one of the most famed country houses in England" (Retford 200). Elizabeth is fascinated not with the portrait of Georgiana by Reynolds, nor with the magnificent collection of such fine arts as Reynolds discoursed on, but with some drawings in crayons by Miss Georgiana Darcy. The playful naming of the housekeeper and Miss Darcy adds a subtle colour to the scene at the picture gallery.

Next, they are handed over the gardener and shown to the garden. After such experiences of aesthetics of picturesque and real paintings,

Elizabeth finally sees the original against the picturesque garden before her eyes:

> Had his first appearance, or his resemblance to the picture they had just been examining, been insufficient to assure the other two that they now saw Mr. Darcy, the gardener's expression of surprise, on beholding his master, must immediately have told it. (251)

Unlike the conversation pieces in indoor settings at Netherfield and Rosings, this serves like a portrait in an outdoor setting. The walking scene of a group of four, Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth, and Mr. and Mrs. Gardiners, through the picturesque garden, contrasts in a striking way with that of a group of three at Netherfield. Austen also makes subtle strokes with her fine brush to pictorialize the indoor scene of Pemberley. As a hostess Georgiana receives the ladies in the saloon,

> whose northern aspect rendered it delightful for summer. Its windows opening to the ground, admitted a most refreshing view of the high woody hills behind the house, and of the beautiful oaks and Spanish chesnuts which were scattered over the intermediate lawn. (267)

With such a beautiful view from the windows, the ladies gather round the table and enjoy the various and delicious fruits in season as follows:

> After sitting in this manner a quarter of an hour, without hearing Miss Bingley's voice, Elizabeth was roused by receiving from her a cold enquiry after the health of her family. She answered with equal indifference and brevity, and the other said no more.
>
> The next variation which their visit afforded was produced by the entrance of servants with cold meat, cake, and a variety of all the finest fruits in season; but this did not take place till after many a significant look and smile from Mrs. Annesley to Miss Darcy had been given, to remind her of her post. There was now employment for the whole party; for though they could not all talk, they could all eat; and the beautiful pyramids of grapes, nectarines, and peaches, soon collected them round the table. (268)

This scene shows Austen's iconographically ingenious pictorialization of the conversation piece, where she arranges the ladies, the table and the pyramids of fruits in the saloon with the windows opening to the beautiful ground. As opposed to the perfect iconographical setting as a conversation piece, no atmosphere of intimate conversation really

comes across in this whole scene. Burlin also examine this scene as a conversation piece and indicates that "Austen composes her artful characters into the art of the conversation piece to show that, ironically, they have nothing to say to each other" (163). All the ladies in the saloon with the view of picturesque beauties from the windows do nothing but absorbedly eat the various fruits around the table without any conversation or presence of an accomplished hostess. Georgiana is "exceedingly shy" (261) and "difficult to obtain even a word from her beyond a monosyllable" (261), and does not carry on the conversation as a hostess "from shyness and the fear of doing wrong" (267). Austen's pictorialization in *Pride and Prejudice* attains its apotheosis in this scene as a "conversation-less" conversation piece. Austen turns Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, into a timid girl and her political salon into an awkwardly conversation-less saloon where Georgiana acts as hostess.[12]

As we have already seen, Austen closely and amusedly interweaves her subversive strategies of pictorialization to burlesque the cultural power of the male dominate society. Through pictorialization, Elizabeth's playful and energetic attractiveness is revealed not to be framed in static posture like a picture under the principles of aesthetics by male language, but to challenge the social framework of gender and class. Gay points out that Elizabeth is the most energetic in Austen's heroines:

> Elizabeth's energy and 'playfulness' give her a charm that is much more organic than the mask of socially dictated femininity, and make her careless of the effect that she creates on those who subscribe to society's gender norms. (91)

Despite "His sense of her inferiority—of its being a degradation—of the family obstacles which judgment had always opposed to inclination" (189), Elizabeth's attractiveness plants the strong attachment in Darcy's mind. Therefore, Miss Bingley's another portrait of Elizabeth produces no effect to disillusion Darcy, though she more fiercely criticizes faults of her rival's features in detail.[13] Her liveliness and playfulness contribute to her attraction to violate the social code and hierarchy. Austen represents Lady Catherine as the very embodiment of the grandeur and social authority, which is grossly caricatured through Elizabeth's visualization. Elizabeth is not the merely gazed object,

nor a trainee of aesthetics lectured in male language, but has acquired and practiced aesthetic knowledge. She has the ability to control what appears in the frame and the pleasure to pictorialize it burlesquely. Elizabeth is quite different from other heroines in Austen's novels, especially Catherine Morland and Emma Woodhouse whose degrading conducts are detected, sharply rebuked and completely silenced under the masculine guardianship. Even though Elizabeth has been reduced to silence and bitterly reflected on her past conduct for some time after receiving Darcy's letter of explanation and then acquiring manifold experiences of arts and aesthetics in Pemberley, her innate liveliness begins to raise its head:

> [Elizabeth's] spirits soon rising to playfulness again, she wanted Mr. Darcy to account for his having ever fallen in love with her. "How could you begin?" said she. "I can comprehend your going on charmingly, when you had once made a beginning; but what could set you off in the first place?" (380)

Does it end with her moral and psychological development through her foolish mistakes and painful disappointment? Is she eventually confined to the framework of the male-dominated society and statically fitted into a picture frame? No, it is Elizabeth who offers a lesson to Darcy, as he confesses, "You taught me a lesson, hard indeed at first, but most advantageous" (369). She shows him how "to please a woman worthy of being pleased" (369). Nevertheless, she is still cautious in her lesson and checks herself, because "She remembered that he had yet to learn to be laught at, and it was rather too early to begin" (371). After their marriage, Georgiana's turn comes around at Pemberley to get Elizabeth's instructions with "her lively, sportive, manner of talking to her brother" (387-88). Pemberley led by Elizabeth arouses Lady Catherine's fear about "that pollution which its woods had received, not merely from the presence of such a mistress, but the visits of her uncle and aunt from the city" (388). Elizabeth's exuberant energy carries the potential for overthrowing the existing framework of the society. In *Pride and Prejudice* Austen depicts her favorite heroine vividly through the subversive strategies of pictorialization. Her incomparable vigour overflowing out of the social framework causes the anxiety about her potentiality, as well as the intense fascination for her. Not only Darcy but also the creator herself seems to be fascinated with the compelling charm of Elizabeth, as Austen declares in her letter to Cassandra, "I must confess that *I* think her as delightful a creature as

ever appeared in print, & how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least, I do not know" (*Letters* 201).

*This paper is revised and rewritten on the basis of my presentation "Jane Austen and Aesthetic Rhetoric" at the 32nd Meeting of Japan Association of English Romanticism on September 24th, 2006.

Notes

[1] In the conversations between Elizabeth and Darcy, Gay states that "the term *perform(ance)* occurs the author's choice of word establishing a metatheatrical conspiracy with the reading audience" (81). Here, other key terms, "portrait" (91) and "likeness" (93) also take place together. I think that the two metaphors of theatrical performance and portrait painting are closely intertwined in this work.

[2] Only two women, Angelica Kauffmann and Mary Moser, were founder members of the Royal Academy. Kauffmann was a Swiss painter. In London from 1766, she became known for her neoclassical paintings and exhibited them at the exhibitions. On her life and works, see *Angelica Kauffmann, R. A.: Her Life and Her Works* edited by Lady Victoria Manners and G. C. Williamson.

[3] Jane Austen, *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. R.W. Chapman, 3rd. ed., 6 vols. (1923. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988), p. 53. All quotations from *Pride and Prejudice* are in this edition.

[4] In the introduction of *Pride and Prejudice* edited by James Kinsley, Isobel Armstrong points out the frequent use of the verb "observe" and the abundance of wordlessly visualized moments of perception (xvii-xviii). Armstrong also discusses the matters as a paradigm of the picturesque in reference to Uvedale Price, Richard Payne Knights, and Humphrey Repton (xix-xxii).

[5] In developing my following arguments, I derive valuable suggestions from Judith Butler's feminist theory on "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution."

[6] Reynolds attacked further:

> IN his Composition his art is too apparent. His figures have expression, and act with energy, but without simplicity or dignity. His Colouring, in which he is eminently skilled, is notwithstanding too much of what we call tinted. Throughout the whole of his works, there is a proportionable want of that nicety of distinction and elegance of mind, which is required in the higher walks of painting. . . . Indeed the facility with which he invented, the richness of his composition, the luxuriant harmony and brilliancy of his colouring, so dazzle the eye, that whilst his works continue before us, we cannot help thinking that all his deficiencies are fully supplied. (86)

[7] Among his notable portraits of this style are Lady Sarah Bunbury as "A Lady Sacrificing to the Graces" (1762) and the daughters of Sir William

Montgomery as "Three Ladies Adoring a Term of Hymen'" (1773). His style of painting was occasionally criticized as plagiarism of the classics. On Discourse IV, Reynolds provides a theoretical justification for the portrait painter's borrowing from the grand:

> But it happens in a few instances, that the lower may be improved by borrowing from the grand. Thus if a portrait-painter is desirous to raise and improve his subject, he has no other means than by approaching it to a general idea. He leaves out all the minute breaks and peculiarities in the face, and changes the dress from a temporary fashion to one more permanent, which has annexed to it no ideas of meanness from its being familiar to us. (72)

[8] Robert Rosenblum examines the posture of sleeping youth growing attraction to that art of earlier epochs which could offer paragons of linear purity and relief style; a Corinthian maid tracing the profile of her lover; Penelope unraveling her yarn while watching over the sleeping Telemachus; and sleeping Endymion (284).

[9] In *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, Austen-Leigh states the contrast between Reynolds' portraiture and Austen's style of writing as follows:

> Reynolds was exercising a higher faculty when he designed Comedy and Tragedy contending for Garrick, than when he merely took a likeness of that actor. The same difference exists in writings between the original conceptions of Shakespeare and some other creative geniuses, and such full-length likenesses of individual persons, 'The Talking Gentleman' for instance, as are admirably drawn by Miss Mitford. Jane Austen's powers, whatever may be the degree in which she possessed them, were certainly of that higher order. She did not copy individuals, but she invested her own creations with individuality of character. (118)

On Reynolds' "David Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy" (1760-61), see Manning's *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings* (*Plates* 42, *Text* 209-10). His paintings of the higher faculty such as "David Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy" or "Mrs Siddons as Tragic Muse" (1783-84), have more degree of similarity between Reynolds and Austen than his mere likenesses.

[10] On the relationship between art and literature, see Hagstrum's *The Sister Arts*. In his argument, Hirukawa refers to Zoffany's two conversation pieces: "The Dutton Family" and "John, Fourteenth Lord Willoughby de Broke with His Wife and Their Three Children." On the conversation pieces in England, see *English Conversation Pictures of Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*. In the introduction, Williamson values the latter picture as "achieving a painting almost unparalleled in its interest of purely domestic life in a great house in the eighteenth century" (1).

[11] In my argument on pictorialization of the scenes at Pemberley, I owe much to that of Burlin.

[12] R. B. Sheridan makes Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, appear as Lady

Teazle in his comedy of manners *The School for Scandal*. In "A Portrait," the dedication to Frances Anne Crewe, Sheridan refers to Reynolds and Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, and mentions the beauty of her eyes as "a purer Beam from Devon's Eyes" (352). The emphasis on Elizabeth's fine eyes in this novel may have a bearing on the Duchess, because she becomes a mistress of Pemberley whose model is said to be Chatsworth.

[13] Miss Bingley severely attacks Elizabeth's blemishes in her feature:

> "For my own part," she rejoined, "I must confess that I never could see any beauty in her. Her face is too thin; her complexion has no brilliancy; and her features are not at all handsome. Her nose wants character; there is nothing marked in its lines. Her teeth are tolerable, but not out of the common way; and as for her eyes, which have sometimes been called so fine, I never could perceive any thing extraordinary in them. They have a sharp, shrewish look, which I do not like at all; and in her air altogether, there is a self-sufficiency without fashion, which is intolerable." (271)

This picture reveals her as a green-eyed monster. Burlin points out that Miss Bingley exposes herself as a bad portraitist in the visualization of her rival (167). Darcy's enthusiasm carries him so far, as to turn Elizabeth's blemishes into beauties and to consider her "as one of the handsomest women" (271) of his acquaintance. Reynolds explained about such a point in Discourse VI:

> PECULIARITIES in the works of art, are like those in the human figure; it is by them that we are cognizable and distinguished one from another, but they are always so many blemishes; which, however, both in real life and in painting, cease to appear deformities, to those who have them continually before their eyes. In the works of art, even the most enlightened mind, when warmed by beauties of the highest kind, will by degrees find a repugnance within him to acknowledge any defects; nay, his enthusiasm will carry him so far, as to transform them into beauties, and objects of imitation. (102)

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